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Mardi Gras ministry results in decisions

By Chip Alford
Baptist Sunday School Board

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Brenda Crimm knows this year's biggest party during New Orleans' Mardi Gras celebration didn't happen in the French Quarter.

"It happened in heaven because of the decisions for Christ that were made along these parade routes," said Crimm, director of the Baptist Student Union at the University of Southwestern Louisiana (USL) in Lafayette.

Crimm and a small group from her school joined more than 150 college students from Kentucky and Louisiana Feb. 7-11 for "Mardi GrasReach" in the heart of Louisiana's largest city.

Coordinated by the Baptist Sunday School Board's National Student Ministry, the event was the first in a series of evangelistic projects known as "BreakOut '97."

During five chilly days and nights of Mardi Gras parades, students formed a "Krewe of Christ," sharing the warmth of God's love with thousands of holiday revelers from around the world. "Krewe" refers to clubs which sponsor one of the 100-plus parades in New Orleans during Mardi Gras.

As a result of the students' efforts, 1,142 people heard the good news of Jesus Christ and 52 made professions of faith.

Rusty Foreman, a graduate student at USL, was part of a small group from his school who led five people to Christ during an afternoon of street witnessing.

"I can get psyched about coming down here and sharing my faith, but it's harder at home," Foreman admitted. "One thing I



STREETS OF NEW ORLEANS — A group of Southern Baptist college students sing and share their faith with Mardi Gras revelers in New Orleans' French Quarter. The annual celebration normally is not known for its religious significance, but the students saw it as a way to spread the Gospel message. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)



STARTING OFF RIGHT — John Schaffner (right), a student at Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, La., leads a group of college students in prayer before they hit the streets of New Orleans to share their faith during Mardi Gras. (BP Photo by Jim Veneman)

know, though; if I can do it here (during Mardi Gras), I ought to be able to do it anywhere."

While the Mardi Gras parades no longer venture into the French Quarter — the crowds are just too large and wild — several groups of the "BreakOut" students did.

"It's tough out there; you see a little bit of everything," Foreman said during a break at Vieux Carre Church, the French Quarter headquarters for the ministry. "But our job is just to share. I believe we're doing some good."

Nathan Catlin, a sophomore at Louisiana State University, led a graduate student at LSU Medical School in New Orleans to Christ after witnessing to her on a street near First Church.

"The privilege of seeing someone come to Christ is so special," he said.

Tim LeBlanc, a junior at Northeast Louisiana University in Monroe, used "Krewe of Christ" Mardi Gras cups to share the gospel.

He led a group of three boys to accept Christ at the same time.

More than 1,000 students are expected to participate in "BreakOut '97," according to Hartman. Upcoming outreach events are planned in Panama City, Fla., March 8-14 and 15-21; Lake Havasu, Ariz., March 15-21; Daytona Beach, Fla., March 22-28; and Key West, Fla., March 15-21.

"I'd really encourage churches and individuals to pray for these events. They can have such an impact on the lives of college students," Hartman said.

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

Philipino pastors in Ga.

Argentines visit Delta

Annuity idea a lifeline

Missionary news

Home mission facts to consider

- ◆ The U.S. is the world's fourth-largest nation — 263,000,000 people, of which an estimated 184,000,000 are lost. Considering only the lost population, the U.S. is also the fourth-largest country in need of the Gospel.
- ◆ Three of four adults believe a person can be a good Christian or Jew without attending church or synagogue.
- ◆ One in five American adults cannot read a newspaper.
- ◆ One child in five in the United States lives in poverty.
- ◆ There are 1.5 million abortions performed in the United States each year.
- ◆ Four of every 10 adults attend a church or synagogue during a typical week.

source: Woman's Missionary Union Speakers Guide, 1997 Week of Prayer for Home Missions

Looking back

10 years ago

The witness of two prominent Mississippi pastors lives on when their widows donate their libraries to Yellowstone Baptist College in Billings, Mont. Mary Green, wife of the late L.E. Green, and Bertha Davis, wife of the late Montie Davis, made the donations in memory of their husbands.

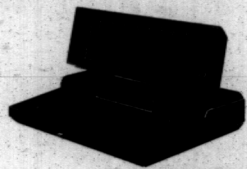
20 years ago

A total of 47 college students from Mississippi represent their school's Baptist Student Union by serving as summer missionaries in 25 state Baptist conventions and six foreign countries. Fourteen institutions of higher learning are represented in the group of Mississippi missionaries.

50 years ago

More than 10,000 people flock to Juniper Grove Church in Pearl River Association for dedicatory exercises. Pastor D. Wade Smith apologizes to the throngs who were unable to gain entrance to the debt-free \$75,000 building and \$25,000 parsonage.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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Christians have role in scientific debates

Maybe Aldous Huxley was right, after all.

Huxley, grandson of the 19th-century pioneer biologist/author credited with discovering the concept of biogenesis, was a popular British author himself in the 1920s and 1930s.

One of his brothers was a prominent biologist and founder of UNESCO, the United Nations scientific agency. Another brother won a Nobel Prize in physiology and medicine.

Aldous Huxley was troubled, however, by the impact of science and technology on human values. As he watched the body of science expand at an unprecedented rate in the years between the world wars, his concern grew at a commensurate rate.

In 1932, he published "Brave New World," a dark novel about a totalitarian society that worships science, disregards individuals, and mass-produces humans through scientific processes.

Huxley and his seminal novel came to mind last week with the news that scientists in Scotland have succeeded in doing what was previously considered biologically impossible: the cloning of a complex mammal that resulted in an identical reproduction of the original lamb from which DNA was extracted.

The scientists accomplished this feat in a laboratory, without the sexual union of a mother and father's DNA — hitherto the only means of biological reproduction for the higher life forms of Earth.

They did it by placing the extracted, donor lamb DNA into an unfertilized lamb "egg" and then implanting the egg into the uterus of a ewe (female lamb).

The implanted DNA apparently triggered the unfertilized egg to begin normal development, and the resultant birth several months later produced an exact copy of the original donor DNA.

The new lamb was not a unique creation caused by the mixing of mother/father

DNA, but simply a younger copy of the original lamb.

If you're a little staggered by all that information, you're certainly not alone. It can be quite confusing for non-scientists, and the tidal wave of punditry since the announcement last week hasn't helped.

You should know this, however: virtually all the experts agree that the cloning process perfected on the Scottish lamb can also be used to clone humans in the same way.

Such a development, although presently illegal in much of the western world, may not be that far into the future. Science has a certain inertia that tends to turn today's conceptual theories into tomorrow's realities.

Therefore, the time has come for Christians to consider the spiritual and ethical questions inherent in this procedure before it runs over us like a freight train.

If a person is cloned — a simple copy of another person and not a unique individual — does the cloned person have a soul?

Is the cloned person somehow less than the rest of us, and what are the societal implications of segregating humans in such a manner? Are these "lesser humans" as expendable as a worn-out machine?

Have we really gone too far this time?

Syndicated columnist Thomas Sowell pointed out the fact that regardless of how we have reproduced ourselves, there has always been the capacity to devalue human existence through extermination, enslavement, and the simple arrogance that perceives "us" as better than "them."

That's been true since long before the word clone was invented.

It's also a fact that cloning and other genetic engineering procedures hold great potential for the betterment of humankind — increased food supply, ideal organs for transplant, and possible cures for our most



Courtesy of Associated Baptist Press

perplexing diseases.

God has already supplied Christians with two ways to sort through the noise surrounding this monumental issue:

◆ Because Jesus Christ bridged the gap for us, we can pray directly to our Heavenly Father about any matter that concerns us (contrast Ex. 26:33 with Luke 23:45 and Hebrews 10:19-22).

We know the Father will answer when we take the time to listen for his still, small voice.

◆ We have the Bible — timeless, filled to overflowing with insight on any issue, and available to us as a model of the mind of God (2 Peter 1:19-21).

In his day, Aldous Huxley may not have been familiar with the technical process of cloning but he was obviously aware of the dangers of substituting science for what is really important.

May we Christians always be a brilliant reflection of our Savior as the world gropes to understand what we already know.

A PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE:



*Be more than
'just a Baptist'*

By Carl M. White, Associate Editor

This young man was going through the line at fellowship meal. A woman behind the table put a big slice of pound cake on his plate.

"Thank you, ma'am," he said respectfully.

"Oh, I just love to hear a young man say such polite and respectful things," the woman responded.

To which the boy replied, "Put a dip of ice cream on top of the cake and you can hear it again!"

A little courtesy can go a long way. I'm convinced that common courtesy is one of the things missing from the world today, and it is sorely missed.

Someone once asked a man how he ever trained his children to be so polite.

"Simple," he answered. "I speak to them politely and treat them with respect."

Some things just can't be taught by a lecture. For instance, you cannot teach a person to fly a plane from a classroom. They have to get behind the controls and fly.

You cannot teach politeness by preaching it. You can only

teach it by example — by living it. Courtesy is caught more than it is taught.

I can hardly think of a situation where common courtesy isn't appropriate.

More than that, courtesy usually helps. There is nothing that disarms an angry person more than being impeccably polite to them. More than once in my years as a pastor, being polite saved my neck!

It is hard, however, to be courteous when you feel mistreated or misunderstood.

Robert Hastings, the late Baptist editor and writer, told the story of a preacher friend returning from an out-of-town meeting. The man stopped to spend the

night in a small Georgia town.

After checking into the motel, he went across the street to a diner. The waitress was the teenage daughter of the owner. In serving the meal, she accidentally spilled mashed potatoes and gravy on the floor.

The busboy came and tried to clean it up, but was rather half-hearted in the effort. He left the floor still slippery with the mess in order to get a mop.

Just then, the waitress came with coffee. She slipped and spilled the whole cup on him.

The poor teenager burst into tears and ran to the kitchen. The owner came out to make apologies.

Instead of exploding into

anger, the preacher left the girl a tip and a kind note of understanding.

The next day when he stopped for coffee just down the road, someone asked if he was the man who had been soaked with coffee the night before.

When the preacher replied in the affirmative, the man who asked said, "If I had been you I would have given that girl a good cussin'."

To which the preacher replied, "I'm a Christian, and I try to practice my faith in every set of circumstances."

The questioner dropped his head and rather sheepishly replied, "Well, I'm just a Baptist."

I've been to a few meetings where it was rather obvious that some people were "just Baptist."

I am convinced that great strides could be taken in solving many of the problems that plague us if we would just extend a little common courtesy to one another.

Try being more than "just a Baptist." It works!

Former pastor convicted in child porn case

Former Mississippi pastor Charles Sherrill Lloyd, 52, of Brandon was sentenced Feb. 12 in Oklahoma City to 15 months in federal prison after pleading guilty to one count of possession of child pornography.

According to an article in the Feb. 13 issue of "The Daily Oklahoman" newspaper in Oklahoma City, Lloyd allegedly downloaded ten images of children engaged in explicit sexual acts from an online computer service and then stored the images on a computer at the Okla. church he pastored, First Church of Bethany.

When church leaders discovered the images in October 1995, Lloyd was forced to resign and the information was turned over to Oklahoma City police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the newspaper reported.

Lloyd subsequently moved to the Brandon area, where he

previously resided while pastoring a Baptist church in Rankin County.

The newspaper reported that Lloyd's attorney, Joe L. Roselle, asked U.S. District Judge Wayne E. Alley to consider probation for the doctoral graduate of Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth, saying, "He's humiliated by what he did. He's given up an honorable and respected profession that he believed in. He's been punished beyond the scope of what we could discuss here."

However, according to the newspaper report, Alley cited Lloyd's alleged 20-year criminal history of indecent exposure and child molestation as an "episodic" problem, and sentenced him to 15 months in federal prison to be followed by three years of supervised probation.

Lloyd was ordered to report to prison on March 26.

Numerous calls on March 3-4 to the Brandon telephone number listed for Charles Lloyd resulted in busy signals.

Charles Womack, current pastor at Bethany, discussed the church's response to Lloyd's alleged conduct with the "The Baptist Messenger," newsjournal of Okla. Baptists.

"The church is strongly opposed to pornography. We do not see this as a victimless crime. It ruins the lives of children, voluntary and involuntary participants in making pornography, and leads to rape, violent crimes, and abortions.

"Bethany has a lot of very loving, caring people and they have handled this in a very Christian, compassionate way," Womack said.

Charles Bettis, associate director of Capital Association in Oklahoma City, served as interim pastor of Bethany

before Womack was called.

Bettis told "The Baptist Messenger" that the church was unaware of Lloyd's alleged criminal history until the pornographic images were discovered in the computer.

What steps can search committee members take to assure they know as much as possible about a prospective pastor or church staffer? What can children's ministry leaders do to screen workers before placing them in a room full of children? For answers to those questions, please turn to page five.



THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

THE BAPTIST
Record

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

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Reccord apparent NAMB front-runner

NORFOLK, Va. (BP) — Robert E. "Bob" Reccord has resigned as chairman of the task force guiding the restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), making the Norfolk, Va., pastor the probable nominee for president of the new North American Mission Board (NAMB).

Reccord, 45, announced his resignation as chairman of the Implementation Task Force (ITF) to members of First Church, Norfolk, at March 2 services.

As chairman of the task force, Reccord led in assisting the restructuring of the SBC, reducing the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12 and creating the new mission agency NAMB.

Reccord is the probable nominee but SBC officials stress the final decision has not been made.

In a prepared statement given to Baptist Press, Reccord said he was one of several men interviewed for president last year.

He said he did not feel compelled to remove himself at that time from the ITF chairmanship as the "discussions were merely introductory."

"I now feel, however, that it is appropriate for me to do so since the (search committee members) have asked me to move forward to another stage of the selection process.

"Though no prior requirement or agreement exists regarding such a step, I believe it to be the high road of integrity to ensure procedural propriety," Reccord said. "I would hasten to add that this step in no way presumes upon the process or my involvement in it," he said.

C.B. "Bill" Hogue, chairman of the 13-member search committee called the "incorporators," confirmed the process is still under way and the group has yet to make its final determination, based in part on how a candidate does in a three-step process: psychological testing, management capability and skills assessment, and physical testing.

Hogue would not comment on Reccord although other sources said he has finished two of the three segments.



Reccord

Appointed as chairman of the 10-member ITF in September 1995, Reccord is a member of the SBC Executive Committee which established the ITF.

Ordained to the ministry in 1973 by Calvary Church, Evansville, Ind., Reccord's first full-time service was as minister of outreach and spiritual development at First Church, Wichita Falls, Texas.

From there he went to the Home Mission Board (HMB) evangelism section as director of witness training.

"My work for the HMB opened my eyes to the field white unto harvest and put a fire in my heart," he said.

Reccord later served as director of leadership training for Evangelism Explosion International.

In the 1980s Reccord became a vice president of sales and marketing for a Michigan company to support his bivocational ministry.

From there he went to Carmel Church, Charlotte, N.C., as co-pastor and then to Bell Shoals Church, Brandon, Fla., as senior pastor. He has been senior pastor at the Norfolk church since October 1992.

He earned master of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees from Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, in 1975 and 1979, respectively, and a bachelor of arts degree from Indiana University in 1972.

In an interview with Baptist Press last fall, Reccord said Southern Baptists are blessed with incredible resources and that restructuring will help maximize those resources.

"To get the attention of the nation," he said, "we have to coordinate what we do, when we do it, where we do it, why we do it, and how we do it.

"We can do that through the North American Mission Board in cooperation with, and in coordination with, state conventions, associations, and local churches."

In an earlier related development, three members of the ITF, who also serve as NAMB incorporators, were named to assist in assessing and recommending persons for NAMB positions.

Reccord named Hogue, Mike Hamlet, pastor of First Church, North Spartanburg, S.C.; and John O. Yarbrough, senior pastor of First Church, Perry, Ga., and ITF vice chairman.

"This group will be responsible for coor-

minating the NAMB staffing process among the HMB, Brotherhood Commission, and Radio and Television Commission," said David Hankins, vice president for convention policy of the SBC Executive Committee and chairman of the NAMB Communications Team.

"They will work with management at each agency to maintain consistency. The details for how this process will work at each agency are still being worked out," Hankins said.



Actress Carol Roberts (standing) performs with Don Warren during a production of "The Sound of Music" at the SBC annual meeting. The series of television commercials for the Convention Board. The production includes dance and Bible reading, will be shown in April. (Photo by Tim McElroy)

The NAMB incorporators also will nominate trustee officers for the new agency.

Hogue set in motion the wide-ranging restructuring in 1993 with his motion to study the convention's structure at the 1994 SBC annual meeting in Houston.

The second and final vote by SBC messengers approving the restructuring took place at the 1996 convention in New Orleans.

Secretary 'grows' six pastors in long career

By Carl M. White
Associate Editor

After 47 years of serving as a pastor's secretary, the time has come for Jayne Woods to call it quits.

"I wanted to retire in the fall, but David Sills asked me to stay on until now," Woods said.



HONORING WOODS — Pastors who served with long-time Woodland Hills Church secretary Jayne Woods (front row, center) and attended a surprise dinner in her honor are (back row, from left) Fuller Saunders, Al Finch, James Scirratt, and Bill Fuller, all former pastors of Woodland Hills; and James Richardson, former interim pastor, (front row, from left) John McCall, former pastor, First Church, Vicksburg; and David Sills, current pastor, Woodland Hills. (BR special photo)

Sills became the pastor of Woodland Hills Church, Jackson, in October 1995 — the sixth pastor with whom Woods has served at the church.

"I feel led to retire," Woods said. She recalled that James Scirratt, a former pastor at Woodland Hills, said he prayed every day that God would let him know when it was time to leave.

"I feel strongly it is time," Woods said.

A surprise dinner was held for Woods on February 21, attended by each of the six pastors with whom she served.

A special worship service was held in her honor, along with a reception attended

by over 300 people.

At a Wednesday night recognition banquet, Woods was presented with a bonus, a love offering, a lifetime stipend in lieu of retirement funds, a book of letters, and other gifts.

In addition, the church mission house was renamed the "Jayne Woods Missionary Home" in her honor.

Woods started as the education secretary 47 years ago at First Church, Vicksburg, her home church.

John McCall, pastor of First, Vicksburg, at the time, told Woods, "If you stay here you will always be 'good ol' Jayne.'"

"So, I ventured out," Woods recalls. Without a job, she moved to Jackson. She found work as the secretary at Duling Elementary School.

A few months later, she was back in church work as the pastor's secretary at Woodland Hills.

That was 40 years ago this March.

Other opportunities came along. When a local physician opened a new office, he asked Woods to be his secretary.

"When I saw that office, small and windowless, I knew it was not for me," Woods said.

Another physician in New Orleans asked Woods to come for an interview. She took the train down. It was her first trip to New Orleans.

"I stayed with a friend who had a basement apartment. I decided New Orleans was not for me, either," she said.

In 40 years, Woods said there hasn't been a lot of change in the job. The single biggest change is computers, which is notably absent from her desk.

"When I started, Henry Crouch had a Dictaphone and that is how he gave me work to do," she recalled.

The job of a pastor's secretary is mostly a people job, she observed.

"People make it interesting," she said. "No two days are alike."

Sometimes being a pastor's secretary can be difficult. Being involved with people who have hurts and needs is not easy, she said, "but it can also be joyous. I like helping people, and I like helping the pastor help people."

Her 40 years at Woodland Hills are filled with happy memories, chief among which is the staff.

"God has been so good in placing who he placed here," Woods said.

Another source of happy memories is the missionary residence.

"Our missionary home opened in 1961. Most of the time we have had a missionary family in the home. It has been such a happy experience; we all get so attached," she said.

To younger secretaries, Woods offers this advice: "Love the pastor and take care of him. I'm old fashioned. I think everything needs to be run by the pastor, whether he makes the decision or not, because ultimately he is held responsible for it."

"The young girls need to realize that they don't have the say-so in matters. He is their superior," she said.

A pastor's secretary is not without influence, however.

"They should protect (the pastor's) time, encourage him, even cover for him," she said.

Most of the pastors with whom Woods has served were younger than she.

That is part of the ministry of being a pastor's secretary, she said. "You have the opportunity to grow a young pastor."

Woods is going on a church mission trip to Honduras in March, and the staff at Woodland Hills is going to have to learn to get along without her.

"We'll just have to do the best we can," said Tom Prather, minister of education at Woodland Hills.

"We've already told her she's going to have to come back and help us, and she is more than willing to," he said.

Filipino pastor answers call to Georgia docks

By Traci Muller
SBC Home Mission Board

SAVANNAH, Ga. — Sometimes one phone call can start something new.

At least that is true for Doug Chanco, director of language missions for Savannah Baptist Association and one of the home missionaries featured in this year's Week of Prayer for Home Missions, March 2-9.

The Week of Prayer is associated with the annual Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions.

As pastor of Crest Hill Church's Filipino mission, Chanco gets phone calls at all hours of the day and night.

In 1991, he received a call that was different. A church member working as a nurse at a local hospital called needing help.

A Filipino sailor who had had a stomach tumor removed was alone, uncertain, and spoke little English.

The nurse believed Chanco, a native of the Philippines, could be a comfort to the man.

Chanco talked with Rodrigo's doctor. The tumor that had been removed was cancerous.

The doctor didn't know how to explain this to the seaman in his language and asked Chanco if he would do it for him.

"I didn't know what to do," Chanco says. "Rodrigo had a three-

year old daughter and a pregnant wife waiting for him at home, and I had to tell him he had cancer.

"I prayed about it, as did my church, and when I got to his room, God had beaten me there. I could feel his presence."

First, Rodrigo told the pastor that he had read the New Testament and had some questions.

This naturally led to Chanco sharing the plan of salvation with him.

With tears in his eyes, Rodrigo prayed with Chanco, asking Jesus to come into his heart.

"I explained to him then that he had cancer," Chanco recalled. "I will never forget. He said, 'Pastor Doug, is Jesus Christ bigger than cancer?'"

"I said, 'Cancer cannot touch your relationship with Christ, your relationship with your wife, our relationship.'

"Cancer could not touch your heart nor your spirit unless you let it."

"We prayed, committing his family to Christ."

Chanco later took Rodrigo to church where he was baptized.

"That is how the Seaman's Ministry began," Chanco declared.

Chanco prays the ministry will be able to use a building near the docks to increase the work being done.

"If someone was here, they would come. The Lord can do amazing things," he said.



DOCKS MINISTRY — Doug Chanco, (right), Savannah Baptist Association language missions director, talks with Mario Jose H. Baldo in front of the Navios Pioneer freighter in Savannah's harbor. (HMB photo by Don Rutledge)

Start Something New
CHURCH STARTING
Season of Prayer
for
Home Missions

MARCH 2-9

Proper policies can avert child tragedy

By Carl M. White
Associate Editor

It is a difficult issue for church members and leaders to discuss. There is a natural modesty about the topic.

Even the mere mention of it causes some to feel overwhelmed. Others will deny it is even possible, thinking, "This is something that happens someplace else, not at our church."

The subject is sexual abuse. Statistics indicate as many as one out of three girls and one out of five boys will experience some form of sexual abuse before they reach age 18.

The incidence of child sexual abuse is roughly the same in churches as in the rest of society, according to Janet Omaitis, therapist with Minirth Meier clinics.

A magazine journal for church leaders reported the traumatic story of a minister's family in Nebraska.

After their two young children were sexually abused by the teenage son of church members, the pastor and his wife discovered the church board did not want to deal with the issue.

They were willing to ignore the charges until it was finally revealed that the perpetrator had also made inappropriate gestures toward children in the church's children department.

Such stories should raise an alarm in the minds of people who are involved

with children at church.

With the high incidence of abuse in U.S. society, a church cannot realistically expect to be immune from the problem.

Linda Reeves, preschool/children's consultant for the Sunday School Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, stresses that churches should have written policies for the protection of children, staff members, employees, and volunteers.

Reeves said children's ministry policies should include provisions for:

- ◆ Applicants for any paid position should sign a consent form for a background check.

- ◆ Prospective volunteer workers should also consent to a background check and complete a questionnaire.

- ◆ No person should be accepted for volunteer service until the church has received and studied the completed questionnaire.

- ◆ Prospective volunteers should be a church member for at least six months.

- ◆ No adult or youth with known prior incidents of sexual misconduct with minors should be permitted to serve in any capacity involving custody or supervision of children.

In addition, Reeves recommends:

- ◆ At least two adult workers should be present at all activities involving children. At no time should one worker be allowed to be alone with one child.

- ◆ Each preschool and children's classroom should have a small window,

giving a view of the entire room.

- ◆ Sanitary protective procedures for changing diapers and assisting in rest rooms.

- ◆ Security methods for releasing preschoolers and children to authorized adults only.

In the case of an actual allegation of sexual abuse, Reeves suggests following the guidelines given in "The Church Law & Tax Report — Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church":

- ◆ Document all efforts at handling the incident.

- ◆ Report the incident immediately to your church's insurance company, attorney, and appropriate church staff.

- ◆ Contact the proper civil authorities.

- ◆ Notify the parents.

- ◆ Do not confront the accused until the safety of the child is secured.

For more information, contact Reeves at P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



Search committees facing big responsibilities

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

The search committee took all the time they needed — the better part of a year — to find just the right pastor for their church. The new man fit right in, and things seemed to be moving along fine until the

unthinkable occurred.

Inappropriate behavior. Moral failure. Poor judgement. Criminal history. Emotional instability. Improper conduct.

You name the story, and Lewis Smith has already heard it. Many times.

That's because Smith is director of the Church-Minister

Relations and Annuity Department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Smith offers advice and training to search committees charged with calling pastors and staff members to serve in Mississippi Baptist churches.

"You have to ask a lot of questions. The main responsibility of the search committee is to do a thorough job in seeking a new pastor or staff member.

"An impressive resume' is not sufficient justification to call a person to serve," Smith stressed.

There are a number of important issues — professional and personal — that must be addressed by the search committee before a prospective pastor or staff member is presented to the congregation, he said.

"A prospect's personal life is relevant; it should be part of the process. Visits with a prospect should provide insight into his or her personal and family life," Smith pointed out.

While most search committees may not conduct formal background checks on every prospect, Smith said, many other information resources can be uncovered with a little legwork.

"The associational director of missions in the county where a prospect formerly pastored can be a good resource.

"Key laypeople in churches pastored by the prospect can often provide the type of information the search committee

needs to know," Smith said.

Even local government officials may provide details that contribute to the overall portrait of the prospect, he added.

Smith is available to advise and train search committees at their request, and he can also provide conflict mediation when problems crop up between a minister and church congregation.

Evangelists' Profile

This space is dedicated to Mississippi men and women who have committed themselves to vocational evangelism. Churches are encouraged to take advantage of their talents in helping to reap the harvest.



This week's evangelist

The Brad Jones family
Meridian

Years in ministry: 14

Education: William Carey College

Places of service: 15 states

Local ministry: Family ministry

Personal: Married to Tammy; two

children, Brice and Devin; all are

involved in the ministry

Home/telephone:

Brad Jones

4116 59th Place

Meridian, MS 39307

(601) 482-7798

For more information or to be included in this space, contact Jimmy Knight, president, Conference of Mississippi Baptist Evangelists, 25 Melody Lane, Laurel, MS 39440.

Search committee questions

to people who know prospect:

1. How would you rate him as a preacher?
2. Are his sermons based on the Bible?
3. Do his sermons reveal spiritual and intellectual preparation?
4. How would you rate him as a pastor (visiting, displaying genuine interest in people's concerns, etc.)?
5. Does he relate well to church staff members?
6. How does he relate to all age groups?
7. How does he rate as a leader?
8. Does he motivate people to do God's work?
9. How would you rate him as an administrator?
10. What are his strong points as pastor?
11. What are his weak points as pastor?
12. What was his reputation for taking care of financial obligations?
13. Is his spouse supportive of his ministry?
14. Does he take part in community activities?
15. Does he participate in associational and state convention work?
16. Is there anything about his personal life we should know?

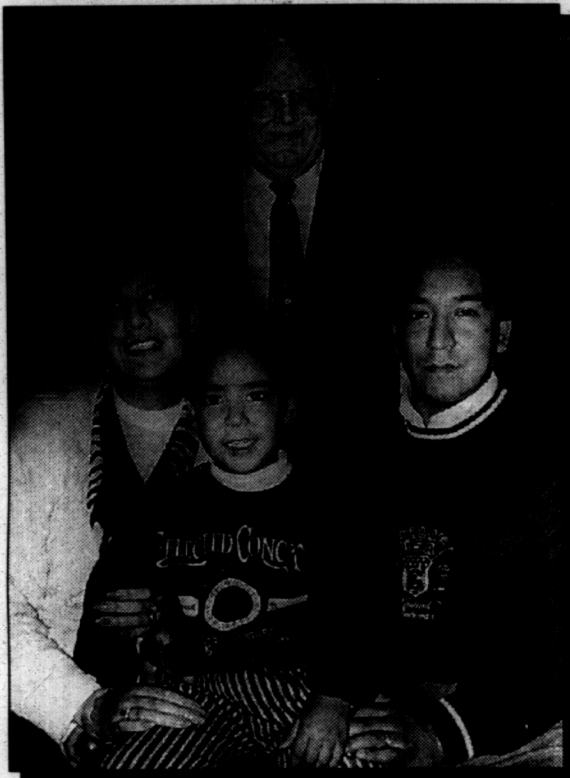
Source: Church-Minister Relations and Annuity Department, MBCB

For more information or to schedule a search committee consultation, Smith can be contacted at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Argentines savor bond to Mississippian

By Gary Perilloux
Clarksdale Press-Register

CLARKSDALE — When three Argentines decided to visit the Deep South on their summer vacation, they met with a chilly reception.



FRIENDSHIP RENEWED — M.C. Johnson (standing) of Clarksdale visits with old friends (from left) Viviana, Ezequiel, and Guillermo Huenchunao of Cipoletti, Argentina. (Clarksdale Press-Register photo by Gary Perilloux)

Although the January weather hasn't been warm here, the Huenchunaos say they have met with a different reception from Mississippi's people.

"The people have been very kind and loving," said Viviana, who teaches English in her city of about 30,000. "We love the country."

The impetus behind the Argentines' visit to Clarksdale dates back a decade, when the Rev. M.C. Johnson visited the Rio Negro province — one of 22 Argentinean provinces — where the Huenchunaos live.

Johnson, executive director of the North Delta Baptist Association, participated in a three week evangelism trip to Argentina in 1986 and the Huenchunaos hosted him in their home.

Invited for a return trip in 1989 by the pastor of their Baptist church, El Redemptor (The Redeemer), Johnson spent seven more weeks with the family teaching conversational English and working in evangelism.

Viviana, who served as Johnson's translator in Argentina, speaks fluent English but learned from British-influenced professors.

"I wanted to come to America to practice my English," she said. "When we decided to come here, we wanted to see M.C. Johnson and meet Mrs. Helen (Johnson) and learn more about the United States."

"So I've been practicing my Spanish," the Rev. Johnson said with a laugh.

In addition to enjoying sites here, the Huenchunaos have been sharing their faith along with scenes of their country at Clarksdale area churches.

Viviana is serving as a translator for her family here while Guillermo, a police officer in Argentina, hopes to

visit the Clarksdale Police Department.

"I like interpreting for people because there are many Americans who come to my country," she said. "I love interpreting. I think that is a way to serve the Lord."

Viviana grew up going to El Redemptor, where she was baptized at age 8 and met Guillermo, who had come from a Catholic background, 10 years later. Guillermo was baptized at El Redemptor when he was 19.

They dated for a year before marrying and say the qualities they enjoy most about Cipoletti are its peace and quiet and strong Christian character.

Church activities center around Wednesdays and Sundays as they do here and the church's young people participate in activities every Saturday evening.

Catholicism is the official religion in Argentina but the churches co-exist well, the Huenchunaos said.

"Different churches in the city are praying for the city to be committed to Jesus," Viviana said. "And all the

churches have the same slogan: 'Cipolletti for Jesus.'"

Like all parents, they pray for a bright future for their 4-year-old son.

But Guillermo shakes his head with a grin when someone suggests Ezequiel might grow up to be a police officer.

"We want him to follow Jesus," Viviana said. "And he'll decide what he wants to be when he's older."

"I would like him to learn English because it's spoken all over the world and its a good way to communicate with others."

The Johnsons, who say Ezequiel is showing quite a penchant for picking up English idioms already, presented their guests with Christmas presents when they arrived just two weeks after the holiday.

"He thinks I'm Santa Claus," the Rev. Johnson said with a hearty laugh. "I'm hoping to go back there (to Argentina) next year for a while."

"It's a beautiful, beautiful country — and people."

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G R E E C E



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MC, Box 4022, Clinton, MS 39058.

Corrections

The location of Handsboro Church, Gulfport, was incorrectly listed as Biloxi on page four of the Feb. 27 issue. Gregg Thomas is pastor.

Childcare for birth through preschool-age children will be available during the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting March 17-18 at First Church, Clinton. Reservations must be made by March 12 with Judy Hicks at (601) 924-6781.

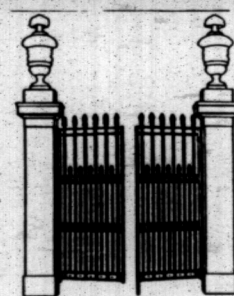
Brownfields Baptist Academy of Baton Rouge, LA is seeking Principal/Administrator. Master's Degree in education or administration and experience required for Pre-K through 8th grade. Send resumes to: Search Committee, Brownfields Baptist Church, 11998 Plank Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70811-1090. Resumes received through 3/13/97.

An arctic blast of air had hit the Mississippi delta when Guillermo Huenchunao, 33, his wife, Viviana Sam Juan, 28, and their 4-year-old son Ezequiel arrived in Clarksdale in early January.

In the apple and grape orchard valleys of their central Argentina home of Cipoletti, school is out for the summer and the weather is warm.

But shortly after their arrival in Clarksdale, the temperature hovered near the single-digit range.

Phone this week			Personally escorted tours		
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who provide assistance through wills, estates and trusts.

'Adopt an Annuitant' is lifeline for retirees

By Carl M. White
Associate Editor

In Mississippi last year, there were 181 retired ministers or their widowed spouses who receive \$100 or less each month from their retirement funds with the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. The Adopt an Annuitant (AA) program is there to help.

The AA program provides a monthly supplement of \$50 to needy, retired ministers; Baptist

workers; and widowed spouses. Funds for the AA program come from donations by individuals and churches, according to John Ambra, manager of the AA program for the Annuity Board.

The AA program began in 1981 with seven participants. In 1996, 2,850 people were helped, Ambra said.

Nationally, there are 9,598 annuitants who receive less than \$200 a month from the Annuity Board.

In Mississippi, there are 1,149

annuitants. Of that number, 405 receive \$200 a month or less.

Participation in the AA program is determined by need and age. "Our toughest problem is getting people to respond," Ambra said.

"We are dealing with a number of people who have a great deal of pride.

"They just don't want to say they need help," said Robin Nichols, annuity representative for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

Suggested gift options are:

- ◆ \$50 monthly gift.
- ◆ \$600 annual gift.
- ◆ \$7,500 permanent endowment.
- ◆ any amount a person wants to give.

"Gifts can be made in honor or memory of some one. Churches have honored a pastor by setting up a fund in his name," Ambra said.

A new video, entitled "Fulfilling the Promise" that tells about the AA program has been released by the Annuity Board. It is available for churches and associations.

For more information about the new video "Fulfilling the Promise" or the Adopt an Annuitant program contact Robin Nichols in the MBCB Church-Minister Relations and Annuity Department, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Staying Well Informed

Medical Education Classes: Taking the Time May Help You Save a Life

Twelve-year-old Chrissa Fleming didn't intend to be a hero, but in January, she became one. Chrissa was at her home with her mother and siblings. Her 5-year-old brother, Christian, was watching television when their mother, Misty, noticed that he was not moving. After calling to him and getting no response, she saw that his lips and face had turned blue and he was not breathing.

She picked him up and ran to a neighbor's to get help. While they waited at the door, Chrissa took her brother from her mother's arms and used the Heimlich Maneuver to try to dislodge whatever object had stopped his breathing. After four thrusts, out came a quarter which had been lodged in Christian's windpipe. Medical professionals say that Chrissa's action saved her brother's life. Just days before, she had learned the Heimlich Maneuver at a babysitting training class at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center.

Hundreds of times every year, the Heimlich Maneuver saves lives. People from all walks of life learn this and other lifesaving techniques at classes sponsored by hospitals and other health-related institutions.

Chrissa's babysitting class was just one of several lifesaving courses offered at Baptist. Participants can learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for infants, children and adults; safety and injury prevention around the home; and a variety of other skills. In addition, classes are offered to help expectant parents, those expecting twins or triplets, and teenaged parents. Through Baptist's schedule of classes, you can learn ways to prevent and cope with breast cancer; how to take actions to decrease your risk of developing heart disease, osteoporosis, diabetes or cancer; and how to help make yourself healthier through diet, fitness and stress reduction. The benefits of taking a class are many, and may even help you, like Chrissa, become a hero.

Understanding the Benefits of Health Education

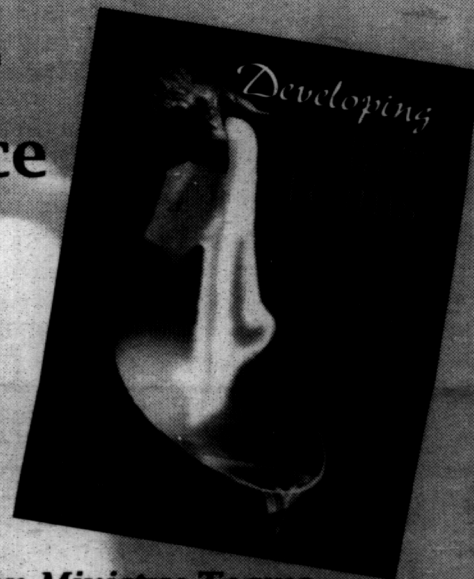
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (While church membership is not required, Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

GRATEFUL FOR PRAYERS

Editor:

It has now been 15 months since my diagnosis of two genetic brain tumors. After accepting the initial shock of this news we began to ask for your prayers. You didn't let us down and neither did our Lord!

In October 1995 the first tumor was successfully removed and I was able to return to the pulpit, with the knowledge I still had one more tumor with which to contend.

(In) November 1996 the second tumor grew suddenly (and) I was back in surgery and intensive care at Baptist Memorial Hospital in Memphis. This time we were warned by our team of neurosurgeons of potential complications that very likely would follow, such as loss of speech, motor skills, or possibly death.

On Thanksgiving Day, it was clear that I had suffered no complications from the surgery and would be able to return to my pastorate tumor-free. What a Thanksgiving!

There is no doubt in my mind that God and his people are responsible for my being here today.

My family and friends, you will always hold a special place in my heart for showing Christ's love and service when I needed it most.

I will never forget your friendship and kindness.

We are now faced with testing our children each year at the National Institute of Health in Washington, D.C. for this genetic condition.

Keep praying Mississippi Baptists! Together with God, you're performing miracles!

Michael Weeks and family
Olive Branch

GOD PREPARED MARRIAGE

Editor:

Upon my first arrival at Blue Mountain College (primarily a woman's college), I thought for certain that before I graduated that place that I would have found the love of my life.

Well, my chances weren't as good as I first thought. Three years later I graduated Blue Mountain with a BA degree, and a few handshakes and smiles. I was proud of my degree, but I was still just as single as I was three years earlier — what a shame.

Little did I know that God was preparing a mate for me in

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the very church in which I pastored. Much to my surprise a certain young lady in my church made it known to me that we were meant to be together.

I didn't think that it would work. She was 17 and I was 33, but the more I studied the situation the more I was inclined to believe that there was nothing morally or Biblically wrong with it.

We are married now. My wife, now at the young, tender age of 19, is the most mature person I know. She is thoughtful, intelligent, hard working, and is the most courageous individual I could ever know. She is my hero!

I want to thank Amity Church for their understanding and support.

Walter Butler
Woodland

BAPTIST FRIENDS BEST

Editor:

I and my family have been reminded of the value of Baptist friendships. After serving 20 years as a full-time minister of education, I entered bivocational work in October, 1996. I felt that I needed to contact associational and state officers to make them aware of my change.

With some apprehension, I journeyed to the Baptist Building intent on visiting most departments.

The first person I saw was Raymond Ball, a friend and co-worker from a previous neighbor church, who now serves as bivocational minister of music in Ridgeland.

Then I visited Robin Nichols in Church/Minister Relations and Annuity who took time from his busy schedule to personally introduce me in several departments.

In the hallway I saw longtime friend Don Hicks who works in Discipleship and Family Ministry. He assured me of his prayers and support.

In the Church Music Department I spoke to Patsy Alford who has been an acquaintance for over 25 years.

Dusty Perkins, editor of "The Baptist Record," remembered a conference years ago where we and our spouses met.

Other workers in the Baptist

Building were friendly and supportive of my vocational work.

I must also recognize Eddie Hamilton, director of missions of Metro Association, who has been very supportive during my transition.

There are also the wonderful church members and staff at the Park Place Church in Brandon who have made us part of their friendly family.

All friendships are important, but Baptist friendships are the best!

Steve L. Owens
Brandon

END DEATH PENALTY

Editor:

When I was a teenager, the newspaper was filled with stories of the approaching execution of Carl Chessman, the "red light" bandit in California.

Several years ago, I relived those youthful thoughts when I read California Governor Pat Brown's book on the death penalty.

Brown signed Chessman's death warrant, and in later years rejected the death penalty.

Through the years I have corresponded with death row inmates, visited them on death row, and once even prepared to be a witness at an execution until a last minute reprieve was given.

The death penalty is no longer needed for the protection of society. It is possible to house men in a humane prison without significant risk of their escape, and there are effective deterrents to violence in prisons.

Also, the death penalty is not a deterrent to crime, and it never has been.

American society is the most violent in the world, and it "legally" executes more human beings than any other country.

Any society that allows itself to take solace, pleasure or pride in the death of another human being, no matter how objectionable that person's conduct, needs to be concerned as much about itself as it is about criminals.

Today the death penalty is capricious, random, and without rhyme nor reason in both the sentencing process and in the execution grounds.

America should enter the twenty-first century without the unnecessary baggage of the death penalty.

Larry Holly
Beaumont, Texas

THANKFUL FOR BLESSINGS

Editor:

New Hope Church, Coffeetown, is a small country church almost 152 years old.

It has had leaders and pastors with much faith to keep it going. It has been a great inspiration and a guiding light to the community.

Through the years it has had it's ups and downs, and in 1989 it was at a standstill and didn't seem to have much future.

The Lord sent us a bivocational pastor, Frank Mixon, and his wife, who was a man with a vision and a dynamite preacher and a warm loving pastor.

Under his leadership and guidance, he and the men of the church with some volunteer help built a 20'x30' fellowship hall in 1991.

It has really been used and enjoyed immensely. Then in 1993 a Sunday School building, 32'x64' was added. It could not be complete without a baptistry that has been used several times.

With support from the church family and donations of money and materials from outside it was debt-free when finished.

Along with the buildings

(Continued on page 9)

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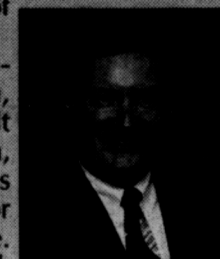
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It's Easy For Your Church to Grow!

As I meet people across our state, and they find out I am Pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Southaven, their response is almost always the same. They say, "it's easy to grow a church in DeSoto County because of all the new people moving into your area!" However, that is not the reason that we have seen our church grow from 200 in Sunday School to over 1,300 in just six years.

Church growth is more a product of what is going on INSIDE the church than OUTSIDE in its community. If it really was "easy to grow a church in a growing community," then why don't the facts prove that to be true? There are 56 churches in the Northwest Association. I researched each of their growth patterns since 1991. Here are the facts: 21 of those churches have shown growth, 9 are plateaued showing no significant change in attendance, and 26 are declining in size. The figures show 38% of our churches are growing and 62% are not.

Churches grow because the Pastor and leaders take the steps necessary to produce growth, not simply because their community grows. It takes just as much hard work, ministry, outreach, and creativity to grow a church in Southaven as it does in your town. Too often we are looking for a "quick fix" when it comes to reaching people. There are none! It all boils down to prayer, hard work, outreach, and ministry. Churches grow best the old fashioned way—WORK.



Dr. Jim Butler, Pastor
Trinity Baptist Church
Southaven, Mississippi

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our attendance has increased. We had 53 in Sunday School on high attendance day.

It is also a mission-minded church. New Hope gave \$933 to Lottie Moon Christmas Offering that is the largest it has ever given.

So you see it has come a long way in its almost 152 years and the Lord is not through with it yet. We are so very thankful for our church and thankful for the Lord's blessings. Without him we could not have done anything.

Louise Koonce
New Hope Church
Coffeeville

SIGN UP FOR MISSIONS

Editor:

I recently returned from a Medical Mission trip to Venezuela. I was one of 74 people from 12 states that participated in this project.

I can truly say that this trip was one of the most wonderful spiritual experiences of my life.

Even though we worked extremely hard meeting physical needs, sometimes as much as 11 hours a day, it was a very rewarding trip spiritually. God often works more in us, than through us.

The worship services were awesome! The Holy Spirit's presence could certainly be felt. We saw the Lord work in many lives, and answer many prayers—more than 1,000 people were saved.

At the present, Mississippi Baptists have a three-year partnership with Venezuela Baptist. This is the second year of that partnership.

There were only two people on the term of 74 that were from Mississippi. I wish that more Mississippians would take advantage of the opportunity to participate in this project.

I understand that there are still vacancies for the VBS

teams scheduled for June and several requests for construction teams for this year. There are also WMU projects scheduled for April and May.

I would like to encourage anyone that is looking for an opportunity to serve the Lord, and to fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ to prayerfully consider this partnership with Venezuela. I know the rewards will be great.

If you interested, you may contact: Partnership Missions Office, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530 or phone (601) 968-3800 or (800) 748-1651.

June Nolen
Mantee

EVERYONE CAN LEARN

Editor:

President Clinton has stated that every child should be able to read before entering third grade. I agree, but as a teacher, I know that we will not see the realization of this goal until educators become aware of and adopt methods and materials that have proven "track records" for teaching all children how to read, write, and spell.

The evidence of the research data leaves no room for doubt. The most effective way to teach beginning reading is through a combination of explicit phonics and "connected" reading.

If approached in a logical and systematic manner, almost everyone of any age can learn to read in a relatively short time.

The persons responsible may not be aware of the research. A summary of the research data for the past 25 years can be obtained by mailing a check for \$5 to: University of Illinois/Summary; P.O. Box 2276, Station A; Champaign, Illinois 61825-277.

During my 25 year career as a reading specialist and faculty member at Mississippi

University for Women, I had the opportunity to examine and evaluate virtually all reading programs in America.

For many years I have actively endorsed a balance of direct, explicit phonics instruction and reading in meaningful content, because I am certain that this is the only combination of instruction that consistently "works" with all children.

If you or your readers would like further information you can contact me as follows: 51 Rivermont Drive, Carrollton, AL 35447.

Jane Hodges
Carrollton, Ala.

WINONA HOMECOMING

Editor:

First Church, Winona, is planning a Homecoming Day in October 1997. The homecoming committee is trying to locate all former members and staff members.

We would like to hear from all former members and former staff members of First Church.

We want to extend a personal invitation to each of these along with their families to be with us on this day.

There may be some who are still members of our church and have moved away of which we do not have a current address.

In order that we may send you a personal invitation, please call the church office at (601) 283-4682 or write First Church, P. O. Box 408, Winona, MS 38967.

We would like to hear from these former members as soon as possible in order to let you know the date and plans for the day.

Reba R. Carwile
Winona

WE ARE SOULS!

Editor:

In response to the (Feb. 6 Guest Opinion) of Paul G. Jones, II, executive director, Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission:

Race relations is a matter of the soul — each individual believer and unbeliever alike.

All members are living souls enshrouded by a visible, physical body, which skin may be of a different color.

We have spent so much time making the distinction of color when, in fact, we should have been concerned with the souls of men whose skin differ in appearance.

The greatest hindrance to our fellowship with other people is our lack of fellowship with our Heavenly Father.

Each member of the body of Christ has been blessed with a human spirit with which we can relate to the Lord himself. We are souls!

Give credit where credit is due. When we walk with the Lord in the light of his Word the credit goes to the Holy Spirit.

When we don't, the credit for our behavior must go to that old sinful nature that resides within each of us.

"Now if I do (habitually) what is contrary to my desire, (that means that) I acknowledge and agree that the Law is good (morally excellent) and that I take sides with it. However, it is no longer I who do the deed, but the sin (principle) which is at home in me and has possession of me." (Amplified Bible)

David W. Koons
Shelby

RACES NOT TO BE MIXED

Editor:

After reading the Guest Opinion of Paul G. Jones, II in the Feb. 6 (issue), it is obvious to me the man advocates that the races come together as one body.

I can only say shame on you. At one time in history all tongues were the same. The people of that day were attempting to build a tower to Heaven, but God changed their tongues where they could not understand one another. In a twinkle of an eye the languages we know of today was put in motion.

Each nationality has their own culture, which God instilled in them at that time.

If you will observe nature, you will see that God's creation is still perfect, unless where man has tried to alter it.

When you see a bluebird and a redbird interbreeding, at that time and only at that time, it will be all right for the races to mix.

Joe Jennings
Laurel

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Seminary courses offered in Jackson

New Orleans Seminary will offer a Biblical studies course beginning March 27, 7-9 p.m., at Broadmoor Church, Jackson. The course is offered through the Church Leadership Certificate Program. Jack Glaze, retired professor from the seminary, will teach the course, "The Gospel of John." The course continues each Thursday evening for eight weeks. There is an enrollment fee of \$25 and a course cost of \$75. Such a study should be of special interest to Sunday School teachers. Persons desiring additional information may contact Chester Vaughn, 268 Northpointe Pkwy., Jackson, MS 39211, or phone (601) 956-6285.

NAMES IN THE NEWS



First Church McLain, deacons



Stewart and Cochran

First Church, McLain, recently honored its deacons. Those honored were Jack Cochran for 29 years of service, Bo Moody for eight years of service, and Kelcey Lee and Ben Byrd for completing their first year of service. Pictured (top) Moody, Byrd, Stewart, and Lee. (Side left) are Dean Stewart, pastor, and Cochran.

First Church, Yazoo City, on Feb. 9 honored Linda Jenkins on the occasion of her 40th anniversary as church secretary. Jenkins' pastor/brother, William (Bill) Jenkins, preached the evening service. Kendy Jenkins, a niece, was featured soloist. Jenkins was presented a money tree at a reception held in her honor following the evening worship hour. David Raddin is pastor.



Hand, Reed, and McCracken

First Church, Magee, held Deacon Ordination Service for Steven Reed on Jan. 12. Pictured (from left) are Kevin Hand, pastor; Reed; and Weaver McCracken, associate, Student Work, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

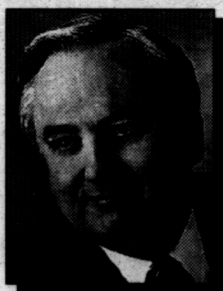
Linda Poore, daughter of

Thomas and Carolyn Poore and a senior at Stringer High School, was nominated by Carey Worthington of West Laurel Church, Laurel, to attend the third annual Christian Youth Leadership Conference in Ma'aleh Adumim, Israel, March 16-25. While at the conference she will attend leadership workshops, complete a tour of the Holy Land, and attend a reception with the Israeli Parliament and Mayor Benny Kashriel. The youth who were picked to attend this conference were chosen on their leadership characteristics shown in school and church. Poore is currently serving as president of the Beta Club and vice-president of the senior class.



Poore

John Lee Taylor, pastor of First Church, Gainesville, Ga., will retire on June 30. A native of Crystal Springs, Taylor was educated at Mississippi College and Southern Seminary. He received a Doctor of Divinity degree from William Carey College. Churches he pastored in Mississippi include Concord, Bentonia; Drew; Canton; First, McComb; and First, Grenada. Taylor and his wife Dolores plan to make their retirement home in Gainesville.



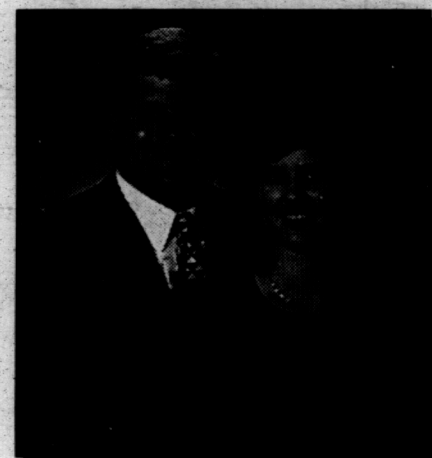
Taylor

Faye Purvis Merritt, 63, of Newton, died Feb. 7. Services were held in Newton on Feb. 8



Beulah Church, Union County Association, held a deacon ordination service for Chris Murphy and David Meeks. Pictured (from left) are Meeks, Randy Hamilton, pastor, and Murphy.

with burial in Ellistown Church Cemetery in New Albany. Merritt was a member of First Church, Newton, and the wife of Gus Merritt, interim pastor at Hazel Church, Newton County. Other survivors include a daughter, Paula Merritt of Chunky; a son, Victor Merritt of Olive Branch; two grandchildren, Rachel Merritt and Nicholas Merritt, both of Olive Branch; three sisters, Mildred Roberts of Ellistown, Frances Bailey of Madison, and Jean Costner of Banner, and a brother, Enoch Purvis of New Albany.



Teel

Gregory Alan Teel, minister to youth and students at Meadowview Church, Starkville, was licensed by Carey Chapel Church, Mt. Pleasant on Feb. 16. Pictured

with Teel is his wife Connie, who presented him with his certificate of license. Others on the program included his father and mother, Carl and Nona Teel; Jack Gregory, pastor; and Dean Bumpas, deacon.

MEDICAL EVANGELISM TEAM TO ROMANIA NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

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BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

William Carey College will offer a series of musical and theatrical performances to be presented at Pecan Shadows Farm, which houses the Genesis Center for Work and Service in Lumberton. Leo Day and Connie Roberts of the Winters School of Music will perform music of Mozart, Schubert, Donizetti, and Gershwin on March 21 at 7 p.m. Miroslav

Loncar and Natasa Klasinc, classic guitarists, will perform a blend of classical favorites from Europe and Latin America on April 13 at 2:30 p.m. Classical piano selections, Gershwin Preludes and hymn arrangements make up the program of Martin Cuellar, April 20 at 2:30 p.m. The faculty of the Winters School will present a program on May 4 at 2:30 p.m. The the-

atre department will be showcased on May 1 at 7 p.m. For tickets or more information call (601) 582-6175.

Milton Wheeler will mark his 21st year of teaching the International Sunday School lesson on the television series, the Family Bible Series, March 31. Wheeler is professor of history and assistant to Chancellor

for special projects at William Carey College.

William Carey College will hold Spring Preview Day March 22 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Registration will begin at 9 a.m. followed by a welcome and panel discussions about housing, financial aid, and student activities. Lunch will be provided from 12 p.m.-1 p.m. The Carey Crusaders Baseball team will play a doubleheader against Louisiana College at 1 p.m. For reservations or information, contact the admissions office at (601) 582-6103 or 1-800-962-5991, ext. 103.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



Temple Church, Big Point, held a note burning for its educational building on Jan. 12. Pictured (from left) are Tom Burrage, Robert Ray, Bill Poole, Dennis Magee, Paul Archey, Johnny Pigford, John Pirkle, Jamis Magee, Rudolph Boler, Freda Schendewitz, and Wm. Lance Hoggatt, pastor.

Trinity Church, Pearl, will celebrate its 25th anniversary at 11 a.m. on March 23. The guest speaker is Shalley Vaughn of Florence. Others on program include the Pearl Quartet. A noon meal will be served. Kenny Goff is pastor.

Hillcrest Church, Jackson, will hold a Winter Bible Study on March 14-16. The times are 6:30-8:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and 10:15 a.m. and 6

p.m. on Sunday. Tommy Lea, dean of School of Theology, Southwestern Seminary, will lead the study. John Taylor is pastor.

A Day of Celebration will be held at Southside Church, Jackson, on March 9. Guest speaker will be Steve Taylor, former missionary to Zimbabwe, Africa. Events of the day will include Sunday School at 9:45 a.m.; 11 a.m. worship;

burning of the \$750,000 mortgage note, dinner on the grounds, and afternoon singing. Jeffrey R. Parker is pastor.

Turner Memorial Day will be held at Calvary Church, New Augusta, on March 9. Activities will include Sunday School at 9:45 a.m.; 11 a.m. message by Roudet Turner, Tyler, Texas, and G.E. and Roland Turner, music; covered dish lunch; and singing, 1-4 p.m.

Relationship Renewal Services will begin at First Church, Waveland, on March 9 at 6 p.m. and continue Mon.-Wed., at 6:30 p.m. Joe Campbell, pastor, First Church, Wiggins, will be leading the worship services. Jodie Cothen is pastor.

Betty Dobbs of Clinton will present a Special Mission Program for Home Missions at Calvary Church, Yazoo City, on Sunday evening, March 9. Dobbs, a licensed ham radio operator, participated in a project in Shkoder, Albania, July, 1994. For further information, call Calvary Church at (601) 746-3719.

STAFF CHANGES

Edwards Church

(Metro): has called Russell M. McIntire, Clinton, as pastor effective Jan. 19. McIntire is a graduate of New Orleans Seminary, where he has served as vice-president. He also previously served for 20 years as pastor of First Church, Clinton.



McIntire

Monticello Church


, Monticello, has called Charlotte Ready as part-time minister of music effective Feb. 2. She is a native of Monticello.



Ready


Hollandale Church

, Hollandale, has called Melissa Stone, Greenville, as music director effective Jan. 19. She is a student at Delta State University where she is studying music, English, and French. She also attended Mississippi Delta Community College. Stone was a summer missionary to Kazakhstan, USSR.



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FMB: Overseas workers hit new record

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Three and a half years ago, Alan Bell said goodbye to his girlfriend, Melissa, and boarded a plane for a two-year term of mission work in Hong Kong. He remembers now it was the hardest thing he'd ever done.

Last fall, Bell and Melissa — now his wife — were named two of 590 overseas mission workers appointed in 1996 by the Foreign Mission Board (FMB) for assignments of two years or more.

That's a record number of new workers in a year's time

for the agency, which now assigns about 4,200 missionaries to work with 336 people groups in 126 countries.

The Bells fit the profile of a growing number of Southern Baptists who served shorter assignments overseas before committing themselves as career missionaries.

Mission leaders say the hand of God is at work producing Southern Baptist overseas workers in record numbers, as more churches become aware of people without access to the gospel of Jesus Christ and stress the need to pray for them.

Southern Baptists are responding to the call for workers on "The Last Frontier" — those unreached, inaccessible areas where traditional mission methods are unwelcome.

"We can't even put into print where some of these people go. They're tough, tough places," said Lloyd Atkinson, FMB personnel selection director.

Lee and Cathy Zwink, appointed in February, are examples of people responding to the needs of "harvest fields" — those areas where new people are accepting Jesus Christ at such a pace mission workers struggle to train enough new leaders for the congregations springing up.

The Zwinks will work in La

Serena, Chile, a beach and tourist city where certain pockets of people are showing a growing interest in the gospel.

Last fall they completed a two-year International Service Corps assignment in Ecuador. Before she married Lee, Cathy worked as a journeyman for two years in Venezuela.

The largest growth areas are for workers in The Last Frontier and Europe.

Last year, 89 of a total 415 workers assigned through the International Service Corps and Journeyman programs went through Cooperative Services International, the FMB humanitarian arm that operates where traditional missionaries are unwelcome.

Of new career appointees, 101 went to work in The Last Frontier.

International Service Corps workers assigned to Europe last year numbered 57.

Of the total number of career appointees last year, 37 were assigned to work in Eastern Europe and countries of the former Soviet Union.

Mission leaders see urgent needs in that area, where reported repression of evangelicals has raised questions about how long mission work there can continue.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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QPVEV VKYH ERCB IPZ, Y
KD CIP ZPVEZZPACYBR,
KRH CIP UYMP: IP CIKC
GPUYFPFCI YR DP, CIBEJI
IP LPZP HPKH, NPC
VIKUU IP UYFP:

QBIR PUPFPR:

CLPRCN-MYFP

Clue: J equals G

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Five Twenty-Four.

HOMEcomings

Lakeshore, Jackson: 20th anniversary; March 9; 10:30 a.m.; noon meal; Fred Tarpley, first pastor, guest speaker; others on program include Doug Herrin, first music and youth minister; Matthew DeBord, pastor.

Holly Springs (Lincoln): March 16; covered dish lunch served; Johnny Smith, speaker; Billy Smith, music; Wendell Smith, pianist; special music at 1 p.m. featuring Obadiah.



MISSIONARY NEWS

Tony and Karen Gray, missionaries to Brazil, are on the field (address: R. Ruy Pinto Bandeira 1112, 29090-130 Vitoria, ES, Brazil). He was born in Mobile, Ala., and considers Moss Point, his hometown. The former Karen Burns was born in Waynesboro and considers Wagarville, Ala., her hometown.

Kevin and Brenda Peacock, representatives to Canada, have arrived on the field to begin their first term of service (address: 6 Glenill Crescent, Cochrane, Alberta, T0L 0W3 Canada). He was born in Natchez and considers Richmond, Va., his hometown. The former Brenda Robinson

of Oklahoma was born in Wewoke and considers Durant her hometown.

Burton and Suzanne Schmitz, missionaries to Togo, have completed language study in France and arrived on their field of service (address: B.P. 125, Dapaong, Togo). He was born in Ancon, Panama, and considers Carrollton, his hometown. She is the former Suzanne Burgreen of San Diego, Calif.

Errol and Mary Simmons, representatives in Hungary, are on the field (address: Gyari u. 38, 2310 Szigetszentmiklos, Hungary). A native of Louisiana, he was born in Baton Rouge and grew up in Franklinton. The former Mary Ishee of Mississippi was born in Jones County and grew up near Laurel.

Keith and Penny Stamps, missionaries to Nicaragua, are on the field (address: Apartado 2340, Managua, Nicaragua). Son of Southern Baptist missionaries, he lived in several states and countries, but considers Clinton his hometown. The former Penny Turner, daughter of Southern Baptist missionary associates, lived in several countries and considers Dallas, Texas, her hometown.

REVIVAL DATES

Pleasant Ridge, Sturgis: March 9-12; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Danny Waddell, Anniston, Ala., evangelist; Susie Haggard, Pleasant Ridge Church, music; Larry Haggard, pastor.

Monticello (Lawrence): March 16-19; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Bill Causey, executive director, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, evangelist; Charlotte Ready, Monticello, music; Jimmy G. McGee, pastor.

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EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Be faithful

Matthew 26:36-46

By Mark Long

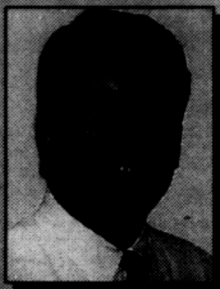
The Marine Corp's motto is *Semper Paratus* (always faithful). On this last night before his death, having just revealed the messianic fulfillment of the Passover, Jesus looked into the hearts of the disciples to see their state of readiness. Jesus said his time was at hand, and so was the time of battle for the disciples.

Rather than fidelity, Jesus found abandonment and betrayal. In verse 31 Jesus said the disciples would be literally "scandalized" ("fall away" in most translations) because of him. This fulfilled Scripture (Zech. 13:7). Jesus was ready

for his time. The disciples were not yet ready. However, Jesus also foresaw hope. He would rise and meet the disciples in Galilee.

A hope of the Gospel is this, though we are not always faithful, Christ Jesus is. He knew the perfecting work the Spirit would do in the lives of the disciples, so even though they were not yet faithful, he would be. His faithfulness to God translated into faithfulness to the disciples. If we become faithful to Jesus, we will also be faithful to our neighbors.

Seeking Support from Others (26:36-38). The humanity of Christ shines forth in this



Long

passage. Humanity is often looked down upon. However, that is because of our sinfulness. Jesus was perfect humanity, as God intended it to be. He was humanity as God intends for us to be. An amazing realization about this is that in his perfect humanity Jesus needed help and support.

Jesus took the disciples to Gethsemane ("olive press"). Here Jesus revealed his struggle to the disciples. He was overwhelmed with grief and distress (v. 38). The weight of his approaching gruesome death crushed in on him. He needed support from his brothers. Not only did Jesus state this, in verse 37 he expressed his emotions openly.

A sad commentary about many a Christian's state of faithfulness is that church is often the

main place we are afraid to show our emotional needs and weaknesses. If we are faithful, our Christian brothers and sisters are free to express their true heart to us without fear of rejection or hurt. Also, we ourselves are able to share our true heart. This is perfect humanity as God intended it to be.

Praying to Do God's Will (26:39-44). Though the disciples would desert him and claim not to know him, Jesus forged ahead in fidelity to God and the disciples. Jesus was being crushed by the weight of the coming events. Even his closest friends Peter, James, and John fell asleep on him when he needed them most. What is one to do in times like this? Prayer is the most powerful tool at our disposal in the battle to be faithful to God.

Jesus often withdrew to pray. When people pressed him the most, he prayed. When peo-

ple needed him the most, he prayed. When he was crushed to the point of sweating blood, he prayed.

We too would find fidelity and superhuman strength to endure the gravest of crushing pressure of life if we spent much time in prayer. "I'm so busy. I can spare a few minutes, but when could I possibly find that much time to do nothing but pray?" Bill Hybels has a book titled, "Too Busy Not to Pray". Is all that business really God's desire, or ours?

Expressing Commitment to Be Faithful (26:45-46). What makes prayer such a powerful tool? For Jesus it was that when he finished praying, he put feet to his prayer. He said, "Get up, let's go" (v. 46). Fidelity comes from actually using the grace and power God gives us through prayer.

Long is pastor, First Church, Perkinston.

FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

Live in love and holiness

I Thes. 3:6-10, 12-13; 4:1-12

By Mary Ellen Powell

Living in holiness is truly the call of all Christians, but often the pursuit of holiness is crowded out by other, more temporal matters. In these verses, we can learn ways that we can further our quest to live in love and holiness.

Good Report (I Thessalonians 3:6-10). Paul and Timothy were encouraged by the lives led by the Thessalonian Christians. A faithful life brings joy to fellow believers, helping them in their own walk.

Worthy Prayer (3:12-13). Paul prayed that their love would increase for each other as well as for everyone else. A

faith that does not love others is not a healthy faith. Our love for others is a spiritual thermometer for our hearts in that if we are walking with God, who is Love, then we will be filled with love. If there is no love in our hearts, then how can we truly love God. Love for others should transcend boundaries of race, economic status, and attitude; without love we will not be able to successfully pursue holiness.

Paul also prayed that their hearts would be strengthened by God so that they would be blameless and holy. Only a heart strengthened by the abundant love of God and love



Powell

for God can be holy. Holiness is something that we can not accomplish on our own power; it can not be attained in a haphazard fashion; it can only be pursued with God's help. Each day, we must choose to pursue holiness and devotion to God. Over the last year, how far

have you come in the pursuit of holiness? We will never reach the ultimate in holiness on this earth, but we can strive daily to do so.

Christian Growth (4:1-2). Paul encouraged the Thessalonians to do what all Christians should do—grow in their faith. The Thessalonians, like most Christians, had been given instruction from God on how to live. Now it was time for them to take what they had learned, build on it, and continue in it—that is something that we all need to do.

Moral Purity (4:3-8). In these verses, Paul told the Thessalonians to be sanctified. It has been said that sanctification signifies the process of which holiness is the completed state. With this definition in mind, we can look at sanctification as the process by which the old ways and habits are increasingly replaced by the things of God. In verses 4-6a, Paul refers particularly to sexual morality as he states that sexual purity is the control of one's body that is honorable, not like the lustful acts of those who do not know God. Verses 6b-8 tell of the consequences of sexual impurity which bring about severe problems in our relationship with God. Sexual impurity is simply not a part of the holy life to which we have been called through Christ Jesus.

Growing Love (4:9-10). The Thessalonians are praised for their love not only for each

other, but for their fellow Christians in Macedonia. All Christians should be spoken of in such a manner. As the world becomes more and more hostile to the things of God, we must strive to always show love toward each other. Truly, love is of God and we set ourselves apart as belonging to God when we show love for others.

Honest Work (4:11-12). Paul encouraged the Thessalonians to work hard and do a good job. In our offices, our schools, our homes, and our churches, there is a need to be committed to our assigned tasks, even if those tasks are on a volunteer basis. A witness can be hurt by a person who professes great faith, but is not conscientious in their work. The world of work is a "field ripe unto harvest." Ask God to use your work, whatever it may be, as an opportunity to be a witness.

Powell is a member of First Church, Clinton.

LIFE AND WORK

Devotion

Matthew 26:1-13

By Thad Moore

An old song goes something like this, "What the world needs now is love sweet love." In this week's lesson we see a woman who loved Jesus dearly. She gave all she had to prepare him for his burial. Her love for Christ overflowed in her giving to him.

The Extravagance of Devotion (26:6-9). The setting of this anointing is the last week of Jesus' life. The chief priest and elders have assembled. They were trying to find a way to kill Jesus.

Jesus was in the home of Simon the leper. He knew what was going to happen and was willing to receive the gracious

gift from Mary. He is willing to receive your gifts. How will you express your devotion to Christ?

Mary came to Christ and poured perfume on him. Her motivation was love and devotion. Her love knew no boundary or limit. Her love counted the cost and gladly used the expensive perfume to minister to Jesus.

When spouses love each other they help each other, not because they have to, but because they want to. Mary gave willingly and freely, what about you?

Some of the disciples did not understand all that was happening. Some of them said



Moore

Mary's gift was a waste. We can be certain that if we lavish our love on Jesus some will not understand. They will say we are lacking discretion or we are being poor stewards. Go ahead and give to Christ anyway.

The Beauty of Devotion (26:10-12). Jesus responded to the criticism of the disciples in a firm manner. He wanted to know why they are bothering Mary. Jesus praised her behavior by saying she had done a beautiful thing to him. He received her love and devotion. He will receive your gifts when you give them from a heart of love.

Jesus went on to tell the disciples the importance of using the opportunities God gives to us. He reminded them that they will always have the poor, but they will not always have him. Opportunities to serve and honor God are all around us.

However, we are not guaranteed tomorrow, now is the time to express our love to Christ.

Jesus is not saying we should be insensitive to those in need. He is helping us keep our priorities in order. Some Christians believe we should concentrate on social action. Other believers feel we should follow Mary's example to the exclusion of helping the poor. Neither extreme is appropriate. We should do both. However, Mary's "waste" has become the exception rather than the norm in churches today. We need to reverse this disturbing trend. This text calls for radical living and giving.

The Influence of Devotion (26:13). The gospel writers preserved this story for us as an example of pure devotion to Christ. We have heard this story many times, thus fulfilling what Christ said in verse thirteen. Mary's devotion serves as a standard when we

serve Christ. Do we give all or hold our best from Christ? Do we love in spite of the misconceptions of others? The choice is ours.

As a pastor, one of the most common questions I am asked is this: Has my life counted for anything? People want to know if their lives have made a difference. The enthusiastic answer of Jesus is yes. If we devote our lives to Christ like Mary, we have Christ's promise that it will not be forgotten. Our witness can influence people now, as well as those who live on after we are gone. Future generations can look at our example and have encouragement to go on in their walk with Christ.

Someone has rightly stated, "We may die, but our influence never dies." Parents, teachers, friends, and church members all live on in our hearts. How will you be remembered?

Moore is pastor, First Church, Holly Springs.

THE VILLAGE VIEW

The Baptist Children's Village



Ronny E. Robinson, Executive
Director
P.O. Box 27,
Clinton, MS 39060-0027
(601) 922-2242

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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of **The Village View** is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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TOUR DATES

The Baptist Children's Village
will conduct tours of statewide campuses on the following dates:

**Dickerson Place Campus,
Brookhaven
and
Deanash Campus, Wiggins**

**Thursday, March 20, 1997
and
Saturday, March 22, 1997**

Tentative Schedule

7:30 a.m. Meet at India Nunnery
Campus for Continental
Breakfast
8:30 a.m. Depart for Deanash
Campus
11:00 a.m. Tour and Lunch at
Deanash
12:30 p.m. Depart for Dickerson
Place Campus
2:30 p.m. Coffee and Tour at
Dickerson Place
3:30 p.m. Depart for Return trip to
India Nunnery Campus
5:00 p.m. Arrive India Nunnery
Campus

**Farrow Manor Campus,
Independence
and
Reedy Acres Campus,
Water Valley**

**Thursday, April 24, 1997
and
Saturday, April 26, 1997**

Tentative Schedule

7:00 a.m. Meet at India Nunnery
Campus for Continental
Breakfast
8:00 a.m. Depart for Farrow
Manor Campus
11:30 a.m. Tour and Lunch at
Farrow Manor
1:30 p.m. Depart for Reedy Acres
2:45 p.m. Tour and Coffee at
Reedy Acres
3:30 p.m. Depart for Return to
India Nunnery Campus
6:00 p.m. Arrive India Nunnery
Campus

For reservations call Chrystelle Thames at (601) 922-2242 or send:

Name _____

Group _____

Expected in Group _____

Telephone _____

to: Chrystelle Thames, The Baptist Children's Village,
P.O. Box 27, Clinton, MS 39060-0027

****NOTE--If you would rather meet us at another campus for tours, let us know.

You can find the missing PEACE



The Prince of Peace extends a wonderful invitation to you.

1. His love gives us peace.

This is his promise:

"Perfect love casts out fear."
(1 John 4:18) When we ask Christ into our lives, his love chases away fear.

2. His promise of eternal life gives us peace.

The Bible says, "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life." (Romans 6:23) God provides eternal life through the death and resurrection of his Son.

3. His promise to walk with us through life gives us peace.

Jesus said, "In me you may have peace. In this world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

Jesus extends his promise of peace to us, but we must respond by accepting him as the missing piece in our lives.

You can make that commitment today by, (1) admitting you need God, (2) confessing your sins to him, and (3) by faith, receiving Christ as Lord.

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Mississippi Baptist Church for spiritual guidance.

Home missionary-physician answers needs

By Sarah Zimmerman
SBC Home Mission Board

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla.—He came to Sunday School as always, but today he had a deep cut on his arm from a bar-room brawl the night before.

He hadn't gone to an emergency room; the bartender stitched the wound closed with a sewing needle and plain cotton thread.

Seeing how the injury had been treated, the pastor suggested that medical students at the church could do a better job than the bartender.

Ered Loper took that challenge and today is a home missionary and physician encouraging Southern Baptists to include medical ministries in their community outreach.

Southern Baptists are affiliated with about 120 sites offering health care, Loper said.

Medical missions can be as simple as blood pressure screenings or as complicated as a mobile dental clinic.

Loper's first experience in medical missions was 20 years ago in the bar where the bartender stitched the wound.

He and other volunteers from First Church of Oklahoma City hung sheets to make private treatment rooms, and their supplies were limited to Band-Aids and cotton balls.

"We saw about a dozen guys that first night. We didn't do one bit of helpful medical care, but we did a whole bunch of spiritual care," Loper recalls.

The ministry they began continues as the Good Shepherd Medical Clinic, though it's moved to another building.

"In medical school I wanted to be in ministry in a full-time way," Loper says.

Other than foreign missions, however, he didn't know of opportunities to combine his medical skills and missions interest.

The experience at Good Shepherd taught him he could be a doctor and a missionary.

Good Shepherd is also where he met his wife, Lavada. A college student in Oklahoma City, she was a volunteer at the health clinic.

Though Lavada is not a doctor or nurse, the couple is definitely a ministry team.

As they lead workshops for churches interested in medical missions, she helps laymen see how they can help keep records straight and provide medical supplies.

"Health care provides an avenue for lots of people to be



PHYSICIAN HEALER — Inside the Good Shepherd Building of the First Church of Oklahoma City, Fred Loper (second from left) assists a client. Good Shepherd provides a clothes distribution and health care ministry, which includes volunteer doctors and dentists. Loper and his wife, Lavada, are the denomination's only appointed medical home missionaries. They travel across the country, conducting workshops on starting ministries like Good Shepherd (HMB photo by Don Rutledge).

involved," Mrs. Loper says. "You don't have to be a health care provider."

Because his life course was set while he was a student, Loper makes working with medical students a priority.

He wants them to experience medical missions while they are in school and while they are determining their priorities.

The Lopers are among eight missionary couples featured in the Week of Prayer for Home Missions March 2-9.

The week of prayer is part of the Season of Home Missions with the theme, "Start Something New."

If the Lopers could ask Southern Baptists to start something new, it would be more ministry among people with HIV and AIDS.

The Lopers work with and have befriended people with AIDS and their families.

Dealing with life and death issues can be draining, Lavada admits, but seeing Christians get excited about the ministry possibilities is rewarding.

Loper says, "We who get called to do ministry always get more than the people we minister with."

"When you're doing your part in the body of Christ you're happy, fulfilled, stretched. I always wonder who's getting the best benefit out of this."



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

Can married couples who are Christians, who divorce and remarry, go to Heaven?

As I read my Bible, I do not see that divorce and remarriage keep a person out of Heaven. Some people may disagree, and I would encourage feedback on this issue. 1 Cor. 7 refers to divorce and the fact that whoever marries a divorced person commits adultery. God does not want us adulterating ourselves with other gods, nor does he want us divorcing. In our sinful world, however, divorce does occur and there are consequences for such an act, but it does not affect our salvation or our entry into Heaven. If a couple is contemplating divorce, Christian counseling is strongly recommended. Children learn about marriage by observing their parents — a most important reason for couples to begin preparing for marriage long before they say "I do" and then striving to build a strong home that reflects the commitment of both parents to their marital relationship. Children must be able to see their parents working out their differences and praying for solutions as they work toward marital oneness.

Just because my spouse is totally disabled, should this disable my needs and sexual desires as well?

This is one of the difficulties that must be faced when trauma strikes a marriage. A Christian couple should normally be about the process of becoming one spiritually, emotionally, and physically. When disability strikes one partner, the other partner's hopes and desires are not automatically erased. You have been dealt what the world would describe as an "unfair blow." Unfortunately, we are not trained how to handle such surprises, so on-the-job-training is about all we have. Find a strong Christian friend of the same sex in whom you can confide these difficulties. Ask that friend to pray with you and for you. A trusted confidant can encourage you when you are headed in the right direction, and rebuke you when you make detrimental decisions. Stay in church and stay in your Bible. God gave you normal needs and desires, and he will now help you deal with those needs and desires if you earnestly seek his will for your life.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.



Season of Prayer
for
Home Missions

MARCH 2-9